

# the condition of education 2007



## INDICATOR 25

### Immediate Transition to College

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Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2007*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007064>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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# Transition to College

## Immediate Transition to College

*The rate of college enrollment immediately after high school increased from 49 percent in 1972 to 69 percent in 2005.*

The percentage of high school completers<sup>1</sup> who enroll in college in the fall immediately after high school reflects the accessibility and perceived value of college education. The immediate college (2- or 4-year) enrollment rate for all high school completers ages 16–24 increased between 1972 and 1997 from 49 to 67 percent. Then, the enrollment rate declined to 62 percent by 2001, before rising to 69 percent in 2005 (see supplemental table 25-1).

Between 1972 and 1980, approximately half of White high school completers immediately enrolled in college. This immediate enrollment rate increased from the late 1970s through 1998 to 69 percent, but decreased to 64 percent by 2001 before increasing again to an all-time high of 73 percent in 2005. The annual Black immediate enrollment rate fluctuated between 1972 and 1977, but then decreased between 1978 and 1982, widening the gap between Blacks and Whites. The rate for Blacks then increased generally between 1983 and 2005, so that the gap narrowed between Blacks and Whites between 1999 and 2001. However, the gap has widened again since 2002. For Hispanics, the immediate college enrollment rate fluctuated over time, but increased overall between 1972 and 2005;

nonetheless, the gap between Hispanics and Whites widened between 1979 and 1998, and then again between 2002 and 2005.

From 1972 to 2005, the immediate enrollment rate of high school completers increased faster for females than for males (see supplemental table 25-2). Much of the growth in the overall rate for females was due to increases between 1981 and 1997 in the rate of attending 4-year institutions. During this period, the rate at which females enrolled at 4-year institutions increased faster than it did for their male counterparts and for either males or females at 2-year institutions.

Differences in immediate enrollment rates by family income and parents' education have persisted. In each year between 1972 and 2005, the immediate college enrollment rate was higher for high school completers from high-income families than for their low-income peers (see supplemental table 25-1).<sup>2</sup> Likewise, compared with completers whose parents had a bachelor's or higher degree, those whose parents had less education had lower rates of immediate college enrollment in each year between 1992 and 2005 (see supplemental table 25-3).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Refers to those who completed 12 years of school for survey years 1972–1991 and to those who earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (e.g., a General Educational Development [GED] certificate) for all years since 1992. See supplemental note 2 for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Low income refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, high income refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes, and middle income refers to the 60 percent in between. See supplemental note 2 for further information.

<sup>3</sup> The earliest year with comparable data available for parents' educational attainment is 1992.

NOTE: Includes those ages 16–24 completing high school in a given year. Actual rates are annual estimates; trend rates show the splined linear trend of these annual values over the period shown. Trend rates were obtained through splined regression that determines breakpoints (for years) empirically by searching for statistically significant linear adjustment knots from all possible knots. The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1992. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. See supplemental note 2 for further information. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. The erratic nature of the Hispanic rate reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanic high school completers.

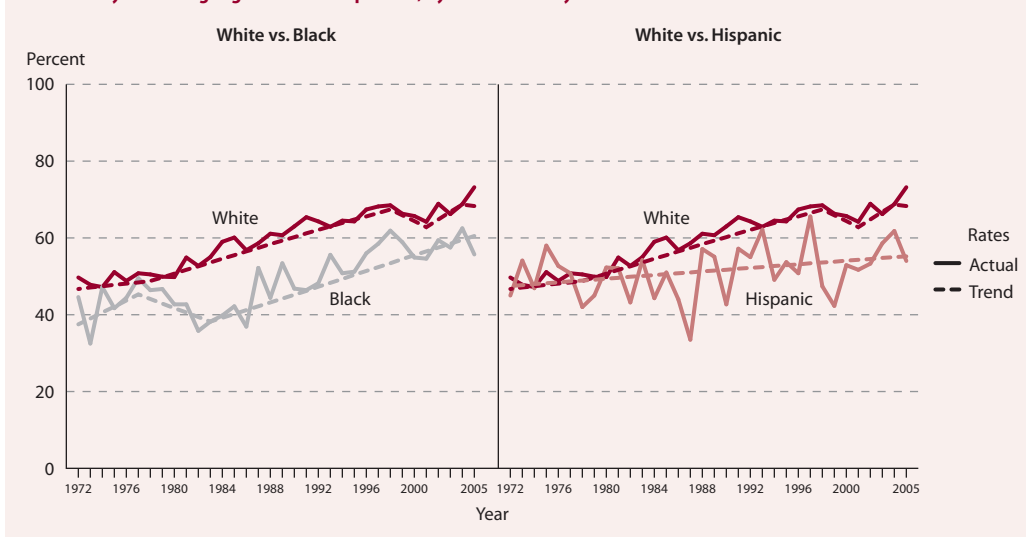
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Notes 1,2  
Supplemental Tables 25-1,  
25-2, 25-3



**COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATES: Actual and trend rates of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by race/ethnicity: 1972–2005**



## Immediate Transition to College

**Table 25-1. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by family income and race/ethnicity: 1972–2005**

Year	Total	Family income <sup>1</sup>			Race/ethnicity <sup>2</sup>				
		Low		Middle	High	White	Black	Hispanic	
		Annual	3-year average <sup>3</sup>	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	3-year average <sup>3</sup>	Annual
1972	49.2	26.1	†	45.2	63.8	49.7	44.6	†	45.0
1973	46.6	20.3	†	40.9	64.4	47.8	32.5	41.4	54.1
1974	47.6	—	†	—	—	47.2	47.2	40.5	46.9
1975	50.7	31.2	†	46.2	64.5	51.1	41.7	44.5	58.0
1976	48.8	39.1	32.3	40.5	63.0	48.8	44.4	45.3	52.7
1977	50.6	27.7	32.4	44.2	66.3	50.8	49.5	46.8	50.8
1978	50.1	31.4	29.8	44.3	64.0	50.5	46.4	47.5	42.0
1979	49.3	30.5	31.6	43.2	63.2	49.9	46.7	45.2	45.0
1980	49.3	32.5	32.2	42.5	65.2	49.8	42.7	44.0	52.3
1981	53.9	33.6	32.9	49.2	67.6	54.9	42.7	40.3	52.1
1982	50.6	32.8	33.6	41.7	70.9	52.7	35.8	38.8	43.2
1983	52.7	34.6	34.0	45.2	70.3	55.0	38.2	38.0	54.2
1984	55.2	34.5	36.3	48.4	74.0	59.0	39.8	39.9	44.3
1985	57.7	40.2	35.9	50.6	74.6	60.1	42.2	39.5	51.0
1986	53.8	33.9	36.8	48.5	71.0	56.8	36.9	43.5	44.0
1987	56.8	36.9	37.6	50.0	73.8	58.6	52.2	44.2	33.5
1988	58.9	42.5	42.4	54.7	72.8	61.1	44.4	49.7	57.1
1989	59.6	48.1	45.6	55.4	70.7	60.7	53.4	48.0	55.1
1990	60.1	46.7	44.8	54.4	76.6	63.0	46.8	48.9	42.7
1991	62.5	39.5	42.2	58.4	78.2	65.4	46.4	47.2	57.2
1992	61.9	40.9	43.6	57.0	79.0	64.3	48.2	50.0	55.0
1993	62.6	50.4	44.7	56.9	79.3	62.9	55.6	51.3	62.2
1994	61.9	43.3	42.0	57.8	77.9	64.5	50.8	52.4	49.1
1995	61.9	34.2	42.1	56.0	83.5	64.3	51.2	52.9	53.7
1996	65.0	48.6	47.1	62.7	78.0	67.4	56.0	55.4	50.8
1997	67.0	57.0	50.6	60.7	82.2	68.2	58.5	58.8	65.6
1998	65.6	46.4	50.9	64.7	77.5	68.5	61.9	59.8	47.4
1999	62.9	49.4	48.5	59.4	76.1	66.3	58.9	58.6	42.3
2000	63.3	49.7	47.8	59.5	76.9	65.7	54.9	56.3	52.9
2001	61.7	43.8	50.0	56.3	79.9	64.2	54.6	56.3	51.7
2002	65.2	56.4	51.0	60.7	78.2	68.9	59.4	57.2	53.3
2003	63.9	52.8	53.1	57.6	80.1	66.2	57.5	60.0	58.6
2004	66.7	49.6	52.0	63.5	79.3	68.8	62.5	58.8	61.8
2005	68.6	53.5	†	65.1	81.2	73.2	55.7	†	54.0

— Not available. Data on family income were not available in 1974.

† Not applicable because data for one of the three consecutive years are not available or one of the years is not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Low income refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, high income refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes, and middle income refers to the 60 percent in between. See supplemental note 2 for further information.

<sup>2</sup> Included in the total but not shown separately are high school completers from other racial/ethnic groups. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

<sup>3</sup> Due to small sample sizes for the low-income, Black, and Hispanic categories, 3-year averages also were calculated for each category. For example, the 3-year average for Blacks in 1977 is the average percentage of Black high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school in 1976, 1977, and 1978.

NOTE: Includes those ages 16–24 completing high school in a given year. The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions about educational attainment were reworded in 1992. Before then, high school completers referred to those who completed 12 years of schooling; beginning in 1992, the term referred to those who received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. See supplemental note 2 for further information. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some estimates have been revised from previous publications.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

## Immediate Transition to College

**Table 25-2. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by sex and type of institution: 1972–2005**

Year	Male			Female		
	Total	2-year <sup>1</sup>	4-year <sup>1</sup>	Total	2-year <sup>1</sup>	4-year <sup>1</sup>
1972	52.7	—	—	46.0	—	—
1973	50.0	14.6	35.4	43.4	15.2	28.2
1974	49.4	16.6	32.8	45.9	13.9	32.0
1975	52.6	19.0	33.6	49.0	17.4	31.6
1976	47.2	14.5	32.7	50.3	16.6	33.8
1977	52.1	17.2	35.0	49.3	17.8	31.5
1978	51.1	15.6	35.5	49.3	18.3	31.0
1979	50.4	16.9	33.5	48.4	18.1	30.3
1980	46.7	17.1	29.7	51.8	21.6	30.2
1981	54.8	20.9	33.9	53.1	20.1	33.0
1982	49.1	17.5	31.6	52.0	20.6	31.4
1983	51.9	20.2	31.7	53.4	18.4	35.1
1984	56.0	17.7	38.4	54.5	21.0	33.5
1985	58.6	19.9	38.8	56.8	19.3	37.5
1986	55.8	21.3	34.5	51.9	17.3	34.6
1987	58.3	17.3	41.0	55.3	20.3	35.0
1988	57.1	21.3	35.8	60.7	22.4	38.3
1989	57.6	18.3	39.3	61.6	23.1	38.5
1990	58.0	19.6	38.4	62.2	20.6	41.6
1991	57.9	22.9	35.0	67.1	26.8	40.3
1992	60.0	22.1	37.8	63.8	23.9	40.0
1993	59.9	22.9	37.0	65.2	22.8	42.4
1994	60.6	23.0	37.5	63.2	19.1	44.1
1995	62.6	25.3	37.4	61.3	18.1	43.2
1996	60.1	21.5	38.5	69.7	24.6	45.1
1997	63.6	21.4	42.2	70.3	24.1	46.2
1998	62.4	24.4	38.0	69.1	24.3	44.8
1999	61.4	21.0	40.5	64.4	21.1	43.3
2000	59.9	23.1	36.8	66.2	20.0	46.2
2001	59.7	18.6	41.1	63.6	20.7	42.9
2002	62.1	20.5	41.7	68.3	23.0	45.3
2003	61.2	21.9	39.3	66.5	21.0	45.5
2004	61.4	21.8	39.6	71.5	23.1	48.5
2005	66.5	24.7	41.8	70.4	23.4	47.0

— Not available. Data on type of institution were not collected until 1973.

<sup>1</sup> From 1973 through 1986, due to a skip pattern in the Current Population Survey (CPS), about 3–9 percent of high school completers ages 16–24 who enrolled in college immediately were not asked the question about the type of institutions attended. Such respondents were assumed to have the same probability of enrolling at a 2- or 4-year institution as those who were asked the question.

NOTE: Includes those ages 16–24 completing high school in a given year. The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions about educational attainment were reworded in 1992. Before then, *high school completers* referred to those who completed 12 years of schooling; beginning in 1992, the term referred to those who received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. See *supplemental note 2* for further information. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

## Immediate Transition to College

**Table 25-3. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by parents' education: 1992–2005**

Year	Total	Less than high school	High school diploma or equivalent	Some college, including vocational/technical	Bachelor's degree or higher	Not available <sup>1</sup>
1992	61.9	33.1	55.5	67.5	81.3	38.0
1993	62.6	47.1	52.3	62.7	87.9	42.0
1994	61.9	43.0	49.9	65.0	82.5	43.1
1995	61.9	27.3	47.0	70.2	87.7	30.8
1996	65.0	45.0	56.1	66.6	85.2	45.6
1997	67.0	51.4	61.7	62.6	86.1	51.3
1998	65.6	49.8	57.2	67.7	82.3	50.1
1999	62.9	36.3	54.4	60.3	82.2	53.1
2000	63.3	44.4	51.8	63.8	81.2	50.5
2001	61.7	39.0	51.9	62.0	81.3	41.9
2002	65.2	43.3	51.9	65.9	82.6	58.7
2003	63.9	43.3	53.9	62.9	82.1	48.8
2004	66.7	39.6	54.7	66.5	85.8	54.4
2005	68.6	43.0	62.1	65.6	88.8	54.8

<sup>1</sup>Information on parents' education was not available for those who did not live with their parents and were classified as a householder, and for those whose parents' educational attainment was not reported; about 9–14 percent of high school completers ages 16–24 were in this category for the period covered.

NOTE: Includes those ages 16–24 completing high school in a given year. *High school completers* referred to those who received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. See *supplemental note 2* for further information, including that on definition of parents' education.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1992–2005.

## Immediate Transition to College

**Table S25-1. Standard errors for the percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by family income and race/ethnicity: 1972–2005**

Year	Total	Family income			Race/ethnicity				
		Low	3-year average	Middle	High	White	Black	3-year average	Hispanic
		Annual		Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual		Annual
1972	1.31	3.45	†	1.75	2.19	1.42	4.62	†	9.74
1973	1.29	3.18	†	1.70	2.13	1.40	4.30	2.62	9.01
1974	1.28	†	†	†	†	1.39	4.58	2.63	8.94
1975	1.26	3.59	†	1.69	2.09	1.37	4.69	2.71	8.44
1976	1.31	4.20	2.17	1.76	2.06	1.43	4.82	2.72	7.97
1977	1.29	3.54	2.22	1.76	2.01	1.41	4.65	2.70	7.96
1978	1.28	3.74	2.13	1.74	2.05	1.41	4.51	2.67	8.44
1979	1.28	3.78	2.11	1.74	2.04	1.41	4.69	2.62	7.92
1980	1.30	3.47	2.14	1.78	2.08	1.43	4.44	2.61	8.70
1981	1.30	3.90	2.11	1.75	2.09	1.44	4.44	2.50	8.19
1982	1.36	3.81	2.29	1.81	2.13	1.52	4.33	2.57	7.96
1983	1.39	4.02	2.20	1.88	2.17	1.55	4.34	2.47	8.96
1984	1.37	3.62	2.26	1.89	2.09	1.54	4.15	2.54	7.67
1985	1.45	4.14	2.18	2.02	2.16	1.62	4.78	2.55	9.76
1986	1.43	3.59	2.23	1.97	2.28	1.62	4.38	2.71	8.85
1987	1.46	3.88	2.21	2.07	2.16	1.65	4.82	2.65	8.25
1988	1.57	4.39	2.54	2.14	2.52	1.79	4.91	2.98	10.14
1989	1.64	4.56	2.66	2.28	2.61	1.85	5.27	2.98	10.51
1990	1.60	4.76	2.63	2.14	2.54	1.80	5.08	2.97	10.82
1991	1.62	4.50	2.62	2.25	2.39	1.82	5.25	2.93	9.58
1992	1.58	4.37	2.60	2.18	2.35	1.84	4.92	2.98	8.50
1993	1.59	4.56	2.55	2.15	2.46	1.85	5.28	2.97	8.22
1994	1.43	3.96	2.27	1.94	2.22	1.61	4.42	2.52	6.28
1995	1.41	3.56	2.16	2.00	1.86	1.64	4.20	2.40	4.92
1996	1.42	3.78	2.18	1.95	2.27	1.67	4.03	2.41	5.79
1997	1.38	3.66	2.14	1.97	1.98	1.64	4.12	2.35	4.53
1998	1.38	3.62	2.11	1.89	2.21	1.61	4.05	2.31	4.92
1999	1.38	3.66	2.11	1.90	2.22	1.64	3.86	2.31	4.76
2000	1.41	3.67	2.14	1.97	2.22	1.66	4.11	2.34	5.03
2001	1.41	3.61	2.07	1.97	2.08	1.64	3.97	2.25	5.33
2002	1.31	3.60	2.14	1.78	2.11	1.53	3.84	2.32	4.55
2003	1.35	3.83	2.18	1.87	2.02	1.61	4.25	2.27	4.61
2004	1.31	3.87	2.23	1.79	2.02	1.57	3.77	2.34	4.76
2005	1.31	3.86	†	1.81	1.98	1.52	4.15	†	4.18

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

## Immediate Transition to College

**Table S25-2. Standard errors for the percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by sex and type of institution: 1972–2005**

Year	Male			Female		
	Total	2-year	4-year	Total	2-year	4-year
1972	1.89	†	†	1.81	†	†
1973	1.87	1.32	1.79	1.77	1.28	1.61
1974	1.85	1.37	1.74	1.77	1.23	1.66
1975	1.83	1.44	1.73	1.75	1.32	1.62
1976	1.87	1.32	1.76	1.82	1.35	1.72
1977	1.87	1.41	1.79	1.77	1.36	1.65
1978	1.87	1.36	1.79	1.76	1.36	1.63
1979	1.88	1.41	1.78	1.76	1.35	1.62
1980	1.86	1.40	1.70	1.81	1.49	1.66
1981	1.86	1.52	1.77	1.82	1.46	1.72
1982	1.95	1.48	1.81	1.90	1.54	1.76
1983	2.03	1.63	1.89	1.91	1.48	1.82
1984	1.99	1.53	1.95	1.90	1.55	1.80
1985	2.08	1.69	2.06	2.02	1.61	1.97
1986	2.06	1.70	1.97	1.99	1.50	1.89
1987	2.09	1.60	2.09	2.04	1.65	1.95
1988	2.24	1.85	2.17	2.20	1.88	2.19
1989	2.35	1.84	2.32	2.27	1.97	2.28
1990	2.29	1.85	2.26	2.24	1.87	2.28
1991	2.33	1.98	2.25	2.22	2.09	2.32
1992	2.24	1.89	2.21	2.23	1.98	2.27
1993	2.33	2.00	2.30	2.17	1.91	2.25
1994	2.05	1.76	2.03	1.99	1.63	2.05
1995	2.03	1.82	2.03	1.95	1.54	1.98
1996	2.09	1.76	2.08	1.92	1.80	2.07
1997	2.01	1.71	2.07	1.87	1.75	2.04
1998	1.96	1.74	1.96	1.93	1.79	2.08
1999	1.95	1.63	1.97	1.95	1.67	2.02
2000	2.13	1.83	2.10	1.88	1.59	1.98
2001	2.01	1.59	2.01	1.97	1.66	2.03
2002	1.88	1.56	1.91	1.82	1.64	1.94
2003	1.97	1.67	1.97	1.86	1.61	1.96
2004	1.95	1.65	1.96	1.74	1.63	1.93
2005	1.94	1.77	2.03	1.77	1.64	1.94

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

## Immediate Transition to College

**Table S25-3. Standard errors for the percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by parents' education: 1992–2005**

Year	Total	Less than high school	High school diploma or equivalent	Some college, including vocational/technical	Bachelor's degree or higher	Not available
1992	1.58	4.99	2.97	3.03	2.44	5.36
1993	1.59	6.00	2.90	3.28	2.09	5.00
1994	1.43	5.00	2.96	2.77	2.06	4.22
1995	1.41	4.44	2.95	2.46	1.79	4.20
1996	1.42	5.63	2.84	2.73	2.01	4.42
1997	1.38	5.51	2.97	2.74	1.86	3.95
1998	1.38	5.61	2.83	2.56	2.12	4.17
1999	1.38	5.00	3.00	2.67	1.99	4.11
2000	1.41	5.49	2.98	2.76	2.06	4.28
2001	1.41	5.29	3.00	2.61	2.06	4.36
2002	1.31	4.90	2.86	2.51	1.88	3.96
2003	1.35	5.61	2.98	2.58	1.94	3.99
2004	1.31	5.12	2.76	2.56	1.72	4.50
2005	1.31	4.81	2.63	2.54	1.66	4.96

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1992–2005.